

STATEMENT

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Latchezar Kostov

Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Agency of Bulgaria

58th General Conference of the IAEA

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Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to join the other speakers in congratulating you, on behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Bulgaria, on your election as President of the 58th session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. I avail myself of this opportunity to assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation in the fulfillment of your important and responsible task.

I am convinced that the Conference deliberations under your guidance will be successful in achieving the IAEA's main objectives: non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, enhancement of nuclear safety and peaceful application of atomic energy.

It is my pleasure to welcome to the Republic of Vanuatu, the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, the Republic of

Djibouti and Union of the Comoros as the new Member States of the IAEA.

The Bulgarian delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Italy on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries.

Mr. President,

Distinguished delegates,

Bulgaria is committed to the efforts of the international community for non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and our policy aims to strengthening the global security and stability. We consider the IAEA Safeguards mechanism as a key instrument for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Bulgaria calls for the universalization of the NPT and IAEA Additional Protocol and we believe the Agency Safeguards activities play indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT.

Bulgaria reaffirms its full support to the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of weapons of mass destruction and we commend the efforts of the facilitator of the process, His Excellency Mr. Jaakko Laajava to bring closer a Conference on this matter.

We regret the decision of the Arab States to include the item "Israeli Nuclear Capabilities" in the IAEA General Conference Agenda. Bulgaria firmly believes that only through the spirit of trust and cooperation we can reach the desired consensus and make progress towards implementing the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference Agreements, in particular on the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East.

Mr. President,

Bulgaria supports the IAEA efforts to continue its verification activities in Iran and to resolve all outstanding issues. In this regard, implementing all practical measures agreed under the Framework for Cooperation between IAEA and Iran is of great importance for meeting the concerns of the international community.

We note with satisfaction that progress has been made so far during the negotiations between Iran and E3+3 for finding a final settlement of the issue with the Iranian nuclear program. We hope that the extended negotiations deadline, set for November 24th 2014, will contribute to reaching the objective of concluding a final agreement.

Bulgaria remains seriously concerned about the nuclear weapons and missile programs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its decision to cease the cooperation with the IAEA. We call on the DPRK to return to full compliance with all its NPT and IAEA safeguards obligations and to provide the Agency with prompt access to individuals, documentation, equipment and facilities and to abandon all its existing nuclear and ballistic missile activities, including its uranium enrichment program, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

We urge Syria to cooperate with the Agency to clarify matters with regard to Dair Alzour and the other sites, and to bring into force an Additional Protocol as soon as possible.

Mr. President,

Distinguished delegates,

We would like to extend our congratulations to the Director General and the Secretariat for the preparation of the 2013 Annual Report. It reflects the full scope of the Agency's activities for the period covered and is substantially informative. The St. Petersburg's International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century conclusions clearly demonstrated that

for number of states the nuclear power remains an important tool to improve their energy security, to provide energy for sustainable development and fight the climate changes. In addition to that, many countries gave high priority to licensing NPPs for extending their operational cycle beyond the 30–40 years as originally provided. In this regard we highly appreciate the IAEA continuous guidance and knowledge sharing facilitation directed to countries with existing nuclear power programs. The IAEA's assistance for strengthening the Member States capabilities in analyzing and planning the national energy resources is indispensable. Meeting the national development goals and providing sustainable energy services can largely be attributed to such assistance.

Building and managing the nuclear knowledge and improving the human resources potential in the nuclear field continues to be of high priority for many Member States. The capacity building and the nuclear researches programs are of great importance for Bulgaria as well. That is why we actively participate in the work of the international scientific organizations as the Joint Institute for Nuclear Researches in Dubna, Russian Federation and CERN in Geneva.

Mr. President,

For the reporting period Bulgaria hosted two high level IAEA visits. In this regards I would like to express our highest appreciation for the visit of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency Mr. Yukiya Amano in Bulgaria in June 2014. His meetings with the Bulgarian ministers, Nuclear Regulatory Agency Management and other government officials were an opportunity for Mr. Amano to be acquainted in details with the Bulgarian peaceful use of nuclear energy and nuclear non-proliferation policy. The visits of Mr. Amano in facilities with IAEA's successfully accomplished projects gave further impetus to deepen and strengthen the cooperation between Bulgaria and the Agency. The Practical agreement between the IAEA and the University of National and World Economy in Sofia on cooperation in the field of scientific research and the organization of a master's degree program on nuclear security was signed during the visit of Mr. Amano. Last but not least, the DG Amano had the opportunity to personally see on site the measures, which were implemented in the "Kozloduy" NPP in the light of Fukushima's accident.

Before that, in September 2013 the DDG of Nuclear Energy Mr. Bychkov visited Bulgaria upon invitation of the

Chairman of the Bulgarian Nuclear Regulatory Agency. Meetings with the members of the Parliament and the Ministry of Economy and Energy contributed to extend the cooperation between Bulgaria and IAEA in the fields of both safety of NPP operation and knowledge management. During his stay in Bulgaria DDG Bychkov visited “Kozloduy” NPP and was acquainted with the status of the plant and the activities for the safety upgrade.

Mr. President,

In June 2014 a Follow-up OSART mission was conducted at “Kozloduy” NPP. Expert’s conclusions were, I quote “The OSART team concluded that the managers of Kozloduy NPP are committed to improving the operational safety and reliability of their plant. It was clearly demonstrated by the systematic approach of the plant in the implementation of measures aimed at achieving and maintaining the high standards of nuclear industry”, unquote. Those conclusions clearly reflect the Bulgarian approach in using the nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

With this Follow-up OSART mission and with the invitation for a Follow-up IRRS mission in 2016 my

country demonstrates its clear commitment to the IAEA Action Plan for Nuclear Safety and to the Council Directive 2009/71/EURATOM as well.

Mr. President,

Kozloduy NPP held a test of self-assessment methodology for nuclear security culture. The final report for the applicability of this methodology in nuclear power plant will be ready by the end of this year. We plan to conduct regular self-assessments for maintaining a good nuclear security culture. We reaffirm our strong commitment for cooperation in the field of prevention, detection and response to theft, sabotage, unauthorized access, illegal transfer or other malicious acts involving nuclear material and other radioactive substances

Mr. President,

At the end of 2013 the next cycle of the Technical cooperation program completed. In accordance with its Program Framework's priorities Bulgaria participated with projects in the field of nuclear safety, nuclear energy and medicine. The successful accomplishment of these projects allowed the beneficiary organizations in Bulgaria to meet the challenges and to promptly solve relevant,

specific issues. Early this month the regional workshop under the current Technical Cooperation Program was held in Bulgaria. It was focused at the Project Planning and Design for the next TC cycle. In November 2014 we shall host another regional workshop on Public Information and Involvement in Regulatory Activities.

In this regard Bulgaria is an active participant in the projects of the Technical Cooperation Programs for the European region. The seminars, training courses, technical meetings, conferences and other scientific events organized in 2013-2014 were attended by more than 170 Bulgarian specialists and scientists from operating organizations, regulatory body, technical support organizations and scientific institutes.

We share the view that the IAEA Technical Cooperation Program is the primary mechanism for supporting the efforts of the Member States for capacity building and also for addressing the development priorities in human health, food and agriculture, water and environment, industry etc. The program also helps Member States to identify and meet future energy needs, and to improve the nuclear safety and security worldwide.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I would like to reconfirm that Bulgaria will continue to support the IAEA activities in promoting the international co-operation in the field of the peaceful use of atomic energy and for the application of the Safeguards. Allow me also to once again express our confidence in the work of the Secretariat and the Director General of the IAEA.

Thank you, Mr. President.